

# Joint Apprentice and Training Committee

International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers



100 Old Forge Road - Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06067  
Telephone: (860) 529-2616 ext. 117 Fax: (860) 529-3686

March 10, 2016

State of Connecticut  
General Assembly

Members of the Commerce Committee,

My name is Mark S. Mastropasqua, I am the Apprentice Coordinator for Sheet Metal Workers Local Union #40, and a graduate Sheet Metal Worker Apprentice.

I would like to address the Commerce Committee today concerning Raised Bill #396, an act concerning a Fast Track for Apprenticeships.

In regards to Apprenticeships for the Licensed or Unlicensed Occupational Building Trades in the State of Connecticut, you can only work in the Licensed Trades if you are either a licensed Journeyperson with the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection or a registered Apprentice with the Connecticut Department of Labor. There are no provisions for employees in any of the building trades either licensed or not, to not serve a registered Apprenticeship.

There are several reasons why I oppose Raised Bill 396. The first being that there will be no means of tracking 'work experience'. Within a proper Apprenticeship, the CT Department of Labor oversees Apprentice and Sponsor and ensures that the Sponsor is employing the Apprentice in the trade that the Apprentice is registered in. With the proposed act, using 'work experience', there is no way to know what trade an employee is actually performing for any employer, as there will be no records. Basically we would be promoting non-registration of Apprentices, and allowing employers to abuse the Apprenticeship System. If you ask any member of any of the CT Occupational License Boards, they will confirm that abuse of the Apprenticeship system is already an issue. Raised Bill 396 will further exploit new workers trying to enter into an Occupational Trade, by making it easy to use any 'work experience' to fast track an Apprentice to complete their Apprenticeship with no actual record of experience in a trade, especially the Licensed Trades.

The next reason that I oppose Raised Bill 396, is that as an Apprentice Coordinator I interview approximately 150 – 200 applicants per year. Many applicants have the same story, they were an Apprentice with a contractor, with no Related Classroom time or they were an employee and never registered as an Apprentice with the CT DOL. The 'work

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experience' will not afford Related Classroom time and again, there will be no means of tracking any Related Classroom hours that the employee might receive.

Finally, these employees with 'work experience' have the possibility of never actually working the required hours in an Occupational Trade, but being promoted to the point of being signed off by an employer as completing an Apprenticeship. When in fact, the OJT and Related Classroom hours were never completed and this so-called 'Apprentice' will be given the ability to take the License test in whichever trade the employer chooses. Again, there are already abuses in the current Apprenticeship system, Raised Bill 396 will only further allow unscrupulous employers to either hire so-called 'Apprentices' and never follow through on their training or hire an 'Apprentice' from another employer and claim the 'Apprentice' has 'work experience', which was never documented and push this person through an Apprenticeship that is void of actual OJT and Related Classroom hours.

Raised Bill 396 will only promote more employees being touted as Apprentices, with sketchy OJT work histories, and no Related Classroom hours. The last thing the State of Connecticut needs is a bunch of untrained workers performing licensed trades.

I hope that the Commerce Committee will carefully consider all sides of this important matter and leave the current Apprentice Training system intact with the Connecticut Department of Labor.

Sincerely ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Mark S. Mastropasqua". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark S. Mastropasqua  
Training Coordinator  
Sheet Metal Workers Local Union #40